

Many made Righteous by the Obedience
of ONE.

T W O
S E R M O N S,

On ROMANS, V. 19.

PREACHED AT
BIDDIFORD, DEVON,

In the Year 1743.

By the Late

Rev. JAMES HERVEY, A.M.
Rector of WESTON-FAVELL.

WITH
A P R E F A C E,
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L O N D O N :

Printed for JOSEPH GURNEY, N^o. 54. Holborn; and
JAMES MATTHEWS, in Thackham's-Court, near
Round-Court, in the Strand.

M.DCC.LXIX.

[Price 6d.]

E R R A T A.

Page 1. line 10. read *establish*

4. l. 3. from the bottom, for *Manner*
read *Matter*

5. l. 11. for *the* read *their*



To the R E A D E R.

THE following Sermons have been judged too excellent, to be suppressed. They were preached, according to the best Information, at *Biddisford*, in the Year 1743.

As to their *Authenticity*, they carry in themselves the strongest internal Evidences of their being genuine. Whoever reads them, will know who wrote them. “Celebrated Writers,” as this excellent Author observes * elsewhere, “have “a Style peculiar to themselves.” This was eminently true of Himself. His Performances (some of his *Letters* excepted, written in the younger Part of Life) are indeed *as Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver*: transmitting the most precious Truths, through the Channel of the most elegant, correct Expression; and adorning the Doc-

* *Meditations*, Vol. II. Preface.

trines of GOD our SAVIOUR, with all the heightening Graces of exquisite Composition. When *Hervey's* Pencil gives the Drapery, TRUTH is sure never to suffer, by appearing in an ill Dress. His Prose is, in general, more lovely and harmonious, more chastely refined, and more delicately beautiful, than half the real Poems in the World. — With *Hervey* in their Hands, his delighted Readers well-nigh find themselves at a Loss, which they shall most admire; the Sublimity and Sweetness of the blessed Truths he conveys, or the charming Felicity of their Conveyance. — There is, if the Term may be allowed, a sort of *Family-likeness*, discernable in all this Author's Pieces. You discover the lively Signatures of the Parent, in every one of his Offspring. They not only carry the Superscription of his Name, but likewise bear the Image of his Genius, and are Himself at Second-hand. — Among others, the ensuing Performance may be considered as a transparent Medium, a Screen of Chrystal, thro' which the Original Writer is distinctly seen, and known

To the READER.

known from every other. A Circumstance, which, with me, has more convincing weight, than the extrinsic Attestation of a thousand Witnesses.

The Copy, from which these Sermons are printed, was lately transmitted to me, for Publication, by a most valued Friend, of *Exeter*. I deem it a particular Happiness, that so choice a Treasure should pass, thro' my unworthy Hands, to the Church of God. And I rejoice the rather, as I have, by this Means, an Opportunity of doing myself the Honor to bear the most open and public Testimony to that grand, fundamental, inestimable Doctrine of a Sinner's FULL, FREE AND FINAL JUSTIFICATION, BY THE ALONE OBEDIENCE AND SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS.

I shall not detain the evangelical Reader from his Feast, any longer, than just to assure him, that neither my excellent Friend, who communicated the Copy to me; nor myself, who communicate it to the World; propose to ourselves any Sort of pecuniary Advantage, from this Publication: nor will

will we accept of any, should the Sale be ever so great.

Respect for the Memory of that holy Man of God, who preached these Sermons; and an Hope of their being made useful, to such as read them; were the Motives, which induced us to send them abroad.—One would wish to *gather up the very Fragments, that remain*, of so distinguished a Writer; and *that nothing*, so apparently calculated for general Benefit, might *be lost*.

I thought it necessary, to add two or three occasional Notes; of whose Propriety, the Reader will judge for himself.

WESTMINSTER,

July 8, 1769.

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

ROMANS



ROMANS V. 19.

*By the Obedience of ONE shall
MANY be made RIGHTEOUS.*

*Y the Works of the Law shall no Man
living be justified, was, not long ago,
the Subject of a publick Discourse :
and, I hope, has frequently been the
Subject of our private Consideration.—O, that
the important Truth may be written most in-
telligibly upon our Hearts, and beget in us a
sound Humility, and an evangelical Poverty of
Spirit!—We then pulled up the *wrong* Foun-
dation, and, now, permit me to re-establish the
right.—We then warned you of the *sandy*
Foundation ; and, now, permit me to lead you
to the *Rock* of Ages : where you may safely re-
pose all your Confidences, and build, with the
utmost Security, for a blissful Eternity. This
is pointed out, in the Scripture before us ; which,
tho' concise in it's Expressions, is rich and co-
pious*

pious in it's Meanings, and breathes the very Spirit of the Gospel.

By the Obedience of ONE shall MANY be made Righteous. The ONE, mentioned in the Text, is *the Man* CHRIST JESUS. The *Obedience*, spoken of, includes both his *active* and *passive* Obedience; the *Labours* of his Life, and the *Agonies* of his Death: all which he *exercised* and *suffered*, in Conformity to his Father's Will, for the Sake of fallen Men; that they, by HIS Righteousness, might be made righteous; that, having these Credentials, they may be admitted into the Court of Heaven, and, carrying this Passport, may be admitted into *the everlasting Habitations*.

THIS Doctrine I take to be the most sweet and precious Part of our Christian Faith; that which gives the most pure and undivided *Honour* to God; which yields the most reviving and solid *Comfort* to the Sinner; and, in the most endearing and effectual Manner, promotes every Interest of *Holiness*. But inasmuch as it is little understood by some, entirely exploded by others, and scarce ever thought upon by more; let us crave your impartial Attention, while I clear up and confirm it: And not only crave your Attention, Brethren, but implore the renewing and enlightening Influence of Divine Grace; without which, I am aware, my Words will be unintelligible to some, and appear, perhaps, ridiculous

by the Obedience of ONE. 3

envious to others : For, *the natural Man discerneth not the Things, which are of the Spirit of God ; on the contrary, they are Foolishness unto him.* Depending, therefore, on Divine Grace, let us examine,

I. How the Obedience of *another* can make *us* righteous.

II. How *sufficient* Christ's Obedience is for this Purpose.

III. How *worthy* this Method of becoming righteous is of *all Acceptation*;—and then,

IV. Give some few Directions, that may dispose us to rely on, and prepare us to receive the Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

First—Let us examine how the Obedience of *another* can make *us* righteous. This Point may be proved and illustrated—

(1st) From the Nature of a *Surety*.

(2d) From Christ's *dying AS A SINNER* for *us*.

(3d) From *Adam's Sin* being *IMPUTED* to *us*.

(1st) THE Doctrine, of our being made righteous thro' the Obedience of Christ, may be proved and illustrated from the Nature of a *Surety*; who is *one that undertakes and engages for another*. Let us suppose the Parties were *Paul* and *Onesimus*. *Onesimus* was *Philemon's Slave*.—The Slave

disobeyed his Master, ran away from him and his Service—nor only deserted his Service, but stole his Goods : turned *Fugitive* and *Thief*, at once.—For the *first* of these Crimes he deserves *Stripes* and a *Rod*—for the *last*, Death and the *Gallows*—*St. Paul*, meeting with *Onesimus*, learns the State of his Condition : and, having been the means of his Conversion to Christianity, by his Preaching ; and of his Reconciliation to God, thro' Jesus Christ ; offers to become his Mediator with his offended Master. In order to execute which Office more effectually, he puts *himself* in the Criminal's *Stead* ; becomes answerable for his Villainy, and takes upon him to make full Reparation for the Injuries he had done to his Master : —*If he hath wronged thee ought*, (says the beneficent Apostle) *or oweth thee ought*, put that to my Account ; I, *Paul*, have written it with mine own Hand, I will repay it.—By this Means, the renegade Slave is discharged, and *Paul* the innocent Apostle becomes Debtor. But how ?—not actually, but imputatively ; for neither has *Onesimus* repaid, nor *Paul* stolen ought ; but, by Virtue of the undertaken Suretyship, *Onesimus's* Debt lies upon *Paul*, and *Paul's* Freedom turns to the Acquittance of *Onesimus*.

THUS it is, in the Manner of Justification.—We had all sinned in Adam ; forfeited the Favour of God.—In Order to our Reconcilement,
 God

God required a *full Satisfaction* to his Justice, and a *perfect Obedience* to his Laws. These we could not possibly render, in our own Persons : therefore, Christ graciously presented HIMSELF, and undertook to perform both in our Stead.—*Upon ME*, says the compassionate Redeemer, *upon ME*, be their Offences laid.—If they have transgressed, let Vengeance make its Demands on *Me* ; I will repay to the very uttermost Farthing ; and forasmuch as, thro' the Weakness of the mortal Nature, they are not able to yield an exact Conformity to the Divine Laws, I am willing to *fulfill all Righteousness* in their Stead and Behalf. *Lo ! I come to do thy Will, oh my God !* I do it, not for myself, but for them : that the Merit of my Obedience may redound to my People, and that they, through my Righteousness, may be made righteous.

(2dly) THE DOCTRINE, of our being made righteous thro' Christ, may be inferred from his *dying as a Sinner for us*.—'Tis a very remarkable Passage, and full to our Purpose, where the Apostle declares, that the Almighty Father made his Son, *who knew no Sin, to be Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteousness of God IN HIM*.

How you may be affected at present with such a Scripture, Brethren, I cannot determine : but if ever you come to the Knowledge of yourselves, and

and the Heinousness of your *Sins*, and the Worthlessness of your *Duties*; such a Text will be sweeter to you, than the Honey or the Honey-comb to your Taste; and more refreshing, than the richest Cordial, to your Souls.—However, from St. *Paul's* Declaration, we gather this precious Truth, that we are *made righteous* before God, in *such a Manner* as CHRIST was *made a Sinner* for us: not by any Personal Merit; for he had done no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth; but *the Lord laid on Him the Iniquities of us all*.

IN like Manner—how are the great Saints made righteous before God? Not by any Personal Merit. They have done nothing, that can deserve God's Love, or that is worthy of a Reward; but God looks upon them as interested in his dear Son's Obedience, and so rewards them purely for their Saviour's Sake.—God visited *our Sins* upon HIM; and God rewards *his Merits* upon us; God accounted *our Transgressions* to be *his*; and, on this Footing, he was punished as a Malefactor, and God esteems his Righteousness as ours: and, by Virtue of this *Imputation*, we are accepted as complete.

(3dly) ONCE again, the Doctrine, of our being made righteous thro' the Obedience of Christ, may receive stronger Proofs and fuller
Illustra-

Illustrations from *Adam's Sin being imputed unto us*.—This is an undoubted Truth, written, as it were with a Sun Beam, in almost every Page of Scripture. St. Paul assures us, that *in Adam all die*. And, if so, 'tis certain that *in Adam all sinned*. Tell me now, how came that *personal Sin* of Adam, to be charged upon us? how can his having eat the forbidden Fruit, render us liable to Death and Damnation? how, but by *Imputation*? Adam was a publick Person: He represented the whole Race of Mankind: His Act was imputed to his whole Posterity. Such a Communion there is between Christ and his Elect: He, too, was a publick Person; he was a Representative of all his chosen Ones; and his Obedience is look'd upon as theirs. Thus Believers are made righteous by the Obedience of their everlasting Head Christ Jesus, even as they were made Sinners by the Transgression of their mortal Father, Adam. Because of the Analogy and Similitude there is between his Righteousness to justify, and Adam's Iniquity to condemn*.

LET

* Mr. Hervey seems, here, to have had an Eye to 1 Cor. xv. 22. *For as, in Adam, all die; even so, in CHRIST, shall all be made alive*. The *πᾶντες*, or *All*, affirmed by the Apostle to have died in Adam, are the same *πᾶντες*, or *All*, that shall be made alive in Christ: namely, all the Members of Christ's mystic

LET us now make a Pause, and review our Attempt. We have endeavoured to render the Doctrine of the Text somewhat clearer, by considering the Nature of a *Surety*—from CHRIST's being *made Sin for us*—and from the *Imputation of Adam's Offence* to us. But these, alas! are Points little known to the World. Corrupt Nature is prejudiced against them; and Satan is studious to hide them from our Eyes. Let us beseech *the God and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST* to reveal the *Mystery of Godliness* in our Hearts: that we may believe in JESUS CHRIST as the Son of God, and only Saviour of the World; *and that, believing, we may have Life*, not through any fancied Goodness of our own,

mystic Body; all that Church, which he loved, and for which he gave himself to Death. There are two Reasons, in particular, which determine the Meaning of the Word *All*, in this Passage, to the *Elect*, and to *them only*. 1. Throughout the whole Context, St. Paul treats, solely, of the *first* Resurrection; the Resurrection of the Just; the Resurrection to Life eternal. He says not one Word, in this Chapter, concerning the Resurrection of the Ungodly: but confines himself singly to that of true Believers. 2. He, in the very next Verse, expressly points out the Persons of whose Resurrection he here speaks: these, he tells us, are *of Christ*, *those that belong to Christ*, and are his own peculiar Property; who were given to Him, by the Father, in the Covenant of Redemption; and in whom he has a special, inamissible Interest.

but entirely thro' his Name. Let us now just take Notice, how sufficient CHRIST's Obedience is for the Purpose of Justification. It is a most incomparably excellent Obedience: it exceeds, not only the Righteousness of innocent and upright *Adam*, but the Righteousness of *Angels, Principalities, and Powers*.—Extol this Righteousness as high as Words can reach, or Idea soar! for it is the Righteousness of incarnate Divinity; wrought out by HIM, who was GOD and MAN in one CHRIST; whose divine Nature gave an Infinity both of Efficacy, and of Dignity, to all he did. *To you that believe* the Godhead of JESUS, his Righteousness must needs be inconceivably precious: you will not, you cannot think it strange, that a whole World of Believers should be accepted through it, and owe all their Salvation to it.—The Prophet, in the most express Terms, sets his Seal to this Truth, when he affirms that the LORD, the supreme and incomprehensible JEHOVAH, is our Righteousness: and who would forsake the everlasting Rock, in order to lean on a bruised Reed? who would quit an illustrious ROBE, for scanty Covering and filthy Rags? St. Paul accounted all Things but Loss, in Comparison of his Saviour's Righteousness. Yea, his own eminent Holiness, and transcendent Usefulness, he regarded no more than Dross and Dung, that he might win CHRIST,

and be found in HIM. This is the Righteousness, whose Influences extend to the earliest Days, and will reach to the most distant Ages: By *this* the holy Men of Old, enjoyed the Favor of God: by *this* ALONE, the Generations yet unborn will enter into their Master's Joy. In a Word, this is the *Hope*, the *sure* and *sole* Hope of *all the Ends of the Earth*, and of *them that remain in the broad Sea*: for, in every Nation under Heaven, and through all the Revolutions of Time, God is well pleased with Sinners, only in his beloved Son. — Let me draw one Remark from the whole, and I have done. Let me observe the Difference between *the Law of NATURE*, and *the Law of MOSES*, and *the Law of FAITH*. The Law of *Nature* says, “Live up to the Duties of thy Reason, and the Conviction of thy own Mind; and thou shalt be safe.” The Law of *Moses* saith, “Keep the Commandments, and execute all the Statutes, and thy Salvation shall be sure.” But *FAITH* saith, “Thou needest not attempt these Impossibilities. CHRIST hath done both, hath done all, in thy Stead. He hath improved the Light of Nature, and fulfilled the whole Law of GOD: and this in the Capacity of thy Surety.” Go, then, to thy Redeemer; lay hold on His Righteousness. Believe truly in CHRIST JESUS, and what He hath done, shall be accounted thine.

by the Obedience of ONE. II

Thy eternal Felicity is ALREADY procured. Thou hast nothing else to do, but to look upon it as thy certain Portion, and unalienable Inheritance, through Christ; and to live in humble and chearful Expectation of that great Day, when thy free Title shall be changed into actual Possession. And, in the mean Time, love that divine Benefactor with all thy Heart, and study to please Him in all holy Conversation and Godliness.



S E R M O N II.

ROMANS V. 19.

*By the Obedience of ONE shall MANY
be made righteous.*

IN the Book of *Job*, iv. 13 to 17. we have a very awakening Lesson of Humiliation, most admirably calculated to impress the Thought, and to bring down the conceited Mind. *Eliphaz* relates a Vision *. When Midnight drew her black Curtains o'er the World, when Darkness

* See Mr. HERVEY's *Contemplations on the Night*, p. 54—57. In the present Sermon, the Description of *Eliphaz's* Vision resembles the primary Sketch, the naked, imperfect Outlines of a masterly Picture: but, in the *Contemplations* (published about 4 Years after this was preached) we behold the Picture completely finished; and touched, I had almost said, into the very Perfection of Grandeur and Beauty.

and

and deep Silence reigned thro' the whole Universe; in these solemn Moments, a Spirit passed before his Face. Fearfulness and Astonishment seized the Beholder; his Bones shivered within him; his Flesh trembled all over him; and the Hairs of his Head stood erect with Horror. In the midst of these tremendous Circumstances, a Voice broke forth from the fiery Phantom: a Voice, for its *Importance*, worthy to be had in everlasting Remembrance; and, for its *Awfulness*, enough to alarm a Heart of Stone. It spake to this effect, "SHALL MORTAL MAN
"BE JUST BEFORE GOD? SHALL A MAN BE
"PURE IN THE SIGHT OF HIS MAKER?" The Words, thus translated, breathe a wonderful Dignity of Sentiment; and lead our Minds into the most exalted Notions of GOD ALMIGHTY, immaculate, and inconceivable.—Certainly, they comprise one of the most powerful Antidotes, against the Pride and Haughtiness natural to fallen Man, that can possibly be imagined. They are a token, in this Sense, truly worthy of the awful Being who uttered them, and that Air of vast Importance with which they were introduced.—Our Translation sinks the Idea exceedingly. It tells us no more, than what all the World must acknowledge at the very first Reflection; and so scarce deserves to be ushered in with so great Solemnity. It seems also to oppose

pose what no one can deny, or have Insolence enough to maintain—for none, I should imagine, even *Lucifer* himself, could ever presume to think himself more just, more pure, than the ORIGINAL and STANDARD of all Perfections.—No: let a Person be esteemed ever so just, in Comparison of his fellow Sinners; let him be accounted most eminently holy, by those that are polluted Clay like himself—Yet, before infinite and uncreated Purity, O! let him be greatly abased; let him put his Mouth in the Dust, take Shame to himself, and cry out, *unclean, unclean!* According to this Translation of the Words, you see, the Doctrine, of Man's universal Depravity, is as ancient as the Times of *Job*: and, that there is no Possibility of being justified by any *personal* Accomplishments or Acquirements, was expressly taught in those early Ages.

O! that it may be as unfeignedly believed in these latter Days! “But, if this be the Case,” says an inquisitive Hearer;—“If *all* Men are “become abominable; if their *best* Deeds are “stained, and there are *none* that are righteous “before GOD,—no not *one*—how shall they be “accepted, when they are judged?”—Why, by a Method that lies vastly beyond the Reach of human Wisdom or Device. By a Method,
that

that was but dimly, † hinted at in the Generations of Old, but is clearly revealed by the Apostles and Preachers of the Gospel; even by the Obedience of Jesus Christ: by a Righteousness *not wrought* BY us, but *imputed* TO us. The Nature of which Imputation we have already illustrated, and shewn the Sufficiency of our Redeemer's Obedience for this Purpose—Which two Points being dispatched,

I am, Thirdly, to shew you how *worthy of all Acceptation* this Method, of becoming righteous, is.—And that as it is perfectly *consonant to the ancient Prophecies*; as it gives the *highest Glory to God*; and as it yields the *richest Consolation to Man*.—First, This Method of becoming righteous thro' the Obedience of Christ, is perfectly consonant to the Tenor of *ancient Prophecies*. In the Patriarchal Age, GOD promised to *Abraham*, and renewed the gracious Assurances to *Isaac*, “that in *his Seed* all the Nations of the Earth “*should be blessed*.” Now, what was this, but a Discovery of this evangelical Doctrine? 'Twas, indeed, somewhat obscure then; but 'tis clear as the Day, now. The *Seed of Abraham*, is

† That is, dimly hinted at, in comparison of that more perfect Knowledge, which has been since brought to Light by the Gospel eminently so called. See *Eph. iii. 5*.

doubtless

doubtless our glorious *Mediator*—who, in the fullness of Time, took Flesh, and was born of a Descendant from *Abraham*. In HIM all the Elect under Heaven shall be blessed.—Observe, not in themselves, not for any Excellency that is in them; but IN HIM, they shall inherit all heavenly Blessings. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of our Happiness; the Beginning and the End, the Cause and the Consummation, of all our Joy. He is the only Spring and Fountain of all Blessedness, as much as yonder Sun is the only Fountain of this Light that now shines around us. Every Ray of Light that falls upon our Eyes, proceeds altogether from that bright Luminary: We do nothing towards enkindling it; we only use its Beams, and rejoice in its Splendor. So fallen Man can do nothing towards procuring the Favour of his Almighty MAKER: But can only, by Faith in JESUS CHRIST, receive it, already procured; and testify his gratitude for it, by a chearful Obedience.

In the Prophet *Isaiah*, we find the following Passages. God the Father, speaking of his obedient and beloved Son, has this remarkable Expression; “*By his Knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many.*” Here, infinite Wisdom informs the whole World, how they must expect Justification, and final Acceptance. 'Tis entirely thro' his dear SON, our divine MEDIA-

TOR ; his holy Life, and propitiatory Death, are the only procuring Causes of our Forgiveness, the only Conditions of our Salvation : and a true Knowledge of Him—a right Belief in Him, make the Merit of both our own †.

GOD says not, he shall make them *capable* of Reconciliation ; he shall *in Part* justify ; he shall *fill up* their Deficiency, and perfect what is wanting in their Duties : No ! but he shall *accomplish* the whole Work ; he shall execute the great Office without a Rival ; without a Partner, he will justify the Faithful, and not they themselves. *Secondly*, This Method of becoming righteous, through the Obedience of Christ, is worthy of all Acceptation, because it gives *the highest Glory to God*. Nothing can be so effectually calculated to *abase* the Sinner, and *exalt* the Saviour, as THIS Way of obtaining Salvation. This will bring down the lofty look of Man : this will lay every assuming thought in the very Dust, and leave the Lord alone glorious and

† From a saving Knowledge of Christ, and by Faith in Him, we are *manifestatively* interested in what He has done and suffered. Our Interest in His Righteousness, must, in the very nature of Things, have been prior to our *sense* of Interest in it : otherwise, all Sense of it would be delusive, and conversant with a Non-entity. Faith is, as it were, the *Medium of spiritual Vision* ; a divine Light, whereby

and exalted. THIS thoroughly secures to God his great Prerogative, and utterly excludes human Boasting, and brings unmingled Honor and Glory to the Surety of Men. Whereas, was Life eternal the Reward of their own Works, there would be some Pretension for Self-Admiration.—Men would arrogate some of the Merit to themselves, and say in their Hearts, “*My Power, and the Might of my Hands hath gotten me this Wealth.*” If they were to expect the Blessing of the eternal State as *Wages* which they have earned, O! what a Damp would this strike on their Thankfulness! how little would they *think* themselves obliged, and, indeed, how little *would* they be obliged, to God their Saviour, on this Footing! But, when Saints in Light view their heavenly Inheritance; when they survey that great, exceeding great and eternal Weight of Glory, and remember that they did *nothing* to deserve all this ineffable Felicity; that, if it had not been procured entirely by their dying and obedient Saviour, they had been everlast-

whereby we see our Interest in Christ, which we cannot see, till we believe with the Faith that works by Love. Faith is the *ελεγχος*, or *Conviction of Things not seen* before: and of Justification among the rest, *Heb. xi. 1.* But, surely, the Blessings, of which Faith is the Conviction, had a real Existence before ever Faith was acted: they are only *unseen*, till Faith is given to discern them by.

Conclusion

ingly banished from the Realms of Blessedness; O! what pure and fervent Gratitude must this inspire them with!—what an Emphasis and Ardor, while they utter that devout Acknowledgment, “*Not, not unto us, O Lord! not unto us, but unto thy dear and adorable Name be the Praise! We were Enemies in our Minds, and by our wicked Works; but thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy Blood: all our choicest Actions were polluted and unclean, but thou hast worked out for us a perfect and everlasting Righteousness.*”

Thus will Adoration and Love be given to the Lamb that was slain: every Crown will be cast low before the Throne, and wear this humbling Motto, “*Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy, he saved us.*” O! the Depths both of the Wisdom and Goodness of God!—*Goodness*, in establishing such a Method of Salvation for us; in all Things, so well ordered and sure! *Wisdom*, in cutting off all Occasion of self-glorying, and bringing Man to the deepest Humiliation, even while it exalts him to the Heaven of Heavens!

III. This Method of becoming righteous thro’ the Obedience of Christ, is worthy of all Acceptation, because it administers the *richest*

Consolation to Man; 'tis an inexhaustible Spring of Satisfaction and Repose.

LUTHER, that renowned Reformer, and great Champion for the Protestant Cause, when he broke away from the Mists of Popery, and began to understand this most noble Peculiarity of Christianity, declared, that "*The Gate of Paradise seemed to fly open to his View:—that he had a Glimpse of its Beauty, in contemplating this sacred Truth; and a Taste of its Delights, in believing it: so sweet a Composure, and such a charming Tranquility, did it diffuse through his Mind.*" Nor do I wonder at his saying, "*For, while we are ignorant of this Doctrine, there is nothing but Horror and Dread around us.*" If we strike this Text from our Bible, or this Article from our Creed, all is dismal and distressing. Turn which way you will, the Prospect is uncomfortable. If we look to *ourselves*, we shall find Misery and Guilt: if to GOD, nothing but Indignation and Displeasure.—But this brightens up the whole Scene. Let us observe, in the Character of a feeble Christian, and of an awakened Profligate, what glad Tidings the Gospel is, by Virtue of this Doctrine; and what a miserable Comforter it would be, without it. The Language of the *former*, in his private Meditations, must proceed in some such Manner as this; "*Wherewithal shall I come*
" before

" before the most high God ? Shall I offer him
 " my pious Services ? Alas ! they are miserably
 " deficient, they issue from a corrupt Stock,
 " and cannot but be corrupt Shoots : I have
 " done nothing that is worthy of his Acceptance,
 " how then shall I stand in his sacred Presence ?
 " I strive to be perfect and entire, and wanting
 " nothing ; but I feel myself to be poor and in-
 " digent, and wretchedly defective. O ! whi-
 " ther shall I go, but to Him who is appointed
 " for this very Purpose ? that the Bones which
 " are broken by Misery and Guilt, may rejoice ;
 " that the Hands, which hang down, thro'
 " Self-Condernation and Despondency, may be
 " lifted up.—Thither then will I turn, frail
 " and dispirited as I am, and cast all my Bur-
 " then upon the Lord JESUS CHRIST : in his
 " unspotted Righteousness, and in nothing else,
 " can the Sole of my Foot find any Rest. When
 " Doubts arise, and Fear, like a gloomy Cloud,
 " thickens around me, this *Sun* of Righteous-
 " ness shall dissipate the Gloom in all my Pil-
 " grimage ; this shall be my constant Song ; in
 " all my Anxieties, this shall be my only Cor-
 " dial—*Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and*
 " *why art thou so disquieted within me ! O ! put thy*
 " *Trust in JESUS CHRIST !* his Merits, and not
 " thine own Works, are the Horn of thy Salva-
 " tion : *whosoever believeth in Him, shall not be*
 " *confounded.*"

“*confounded.*” And as for the poor Sinner brought to a Sense of his enormous Crimes; methinks, I hear him bewailing his Condition, in some such disconsolate Manner: “O wretched Man that I am! how shall I attain the Favour of God? my Sins are multiplied above Number, and aggravated beyond Expression. I cannot make any Satisfaction for what is past, much less can I win the divine Good-will for the Future. I am polluted, Root and Branch: what can I do?”—Truly, Sinner, I know not what thou canst do, unless thou comest to JESUS CHRIST: there is not a Gleam of Hope, or a Grain of Comfort, in all the Universe besides. If thou lamentest thy Folly; and feelest thy undone State; *with the Lord there is Mercy*, abundant Mercy; and with the Lord JESUS CHRIST there is *plenteous Redemption*. If thou canst rely on *Christ*, thy Iniquities shall be done away like a Morning Cloud; if thou canst believe in Him, thy Debts are cancelled through his Blood; and that which thou art unable to perform, He hath fulfilled for thee. See, how consonant this Doctrine is to the whole Series of Scripture, and the Voice of ancient Prophecies! See, what an unshared Revenue of Glory and Thanksgiving, it brings unto the blessed God.—Both supporting the *feeble Christian* amidst all his Infirmities, and opening

opening a Door of Hope to the *awakened Sinner*, notwithstanding all his Impieties! Surely, then, this precious Doctrine is worthy of all Acceptation: surely, we have Reason to receive it with all imaginable Thankfulness! But, lest it should, after all, seem to us as an idle Tale, rather than glad Tidings of great Joy, let me,

IV. Give some Directions that may dispose us to rely on, and prepare us to receive, the Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

First, bring a Child-like Mind to the Consideration of it. Lay aside Propositions*, and meekly receive the engrafted Word with a teachable Simplicity. Let us sit at the Feet of Jesus, and, like very little Children, learn

* “Lay aside *Propositions* :” a mistake, perhaps, for *Prepossessions*. However, the Sentence, as it stands, conveys a very useful Direction: “lay aside Propositions,” i. e. Submit your Wisdom to God’s; embrace His gracious Method of Salvation; without arguing yourself into needless Doubts and Perplexities.—Mr. HERVEY seems, here, to intimate, what another excellent Divine has since expressed more clearly: “Believe simply, with the Meekness of a Child, just as you are told by God, without murmuring or disputing. Depend as absolutely, Day by Day, on the Teaching of Christ, through his Word and Spirit, for the Knowledge of all Things needful to Salvation, as any Pupil, at an Academy, depends on the Instructions of an able and celebrated Master.”

Mr. VENN’s *Complete Duty of Man*, p. 165.
heavenly

heavenly Wisdom from his Gospel. If we are conceited of our Abilities, and lean to our own Understanding, God may punish our Pride, by leaving us in the Dark ; for he *hides these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and reveals them unto Babes.*—You must acknowledge your natural Ignorance, and implore the Teachings of his blessed Spirit : for this is His peculiar Office, to convince the World of Righteousness ; that is, to convince the World of the Fullness of the Redeemer's Righteousness, of its unsearchable Riches, and of its absolute Sufficiency to justify his People.—*Secondly*, If you would not be offended at this Doctrine, get a deep Sense of *your own Unrighteousness*. 'Tis the Want of *this* Conviction, that indisposes Men for a Reliance on Christ : so long as they fancy themselves *rich and increased in Goods*, they will never be concerned to seek the *fine Gold* of their Saviour's Obedience.—And, indeed, he *came not to call the Righteous* ; his Gospel is of such a Nature, that the Self-Justiciary will discern no Comeliness in it : It will feed the *Hungry*, and *poor in Spirit*, with good Things ; but the *Rich*, and those that are *righteous in their own Eyes*, it will send empty away.

Labour, therefore, to see your own Vileness : and then the Merits of a Saviour will be precious. Be sensible of your own *Nakedness*, and then the

Robe of a Redeemer's Righteousness will be prized indeed. Consider yourselves as *insolvent, wretched Bankrupts*, who HAVE nothing, who can DO nothing, that is spiritually good; and then the perfect Obedience, the full Satisfaction of your divine Surety, will be as *Health to your Soul, and as Marrow to your Bones.*

Thirdly, Pray for Faith. 'Tis Faith that unites † to Jesus Christ. By Faith you are implanted into him. *Faith* is the *Hand* that lays hold on the Saviour's Merits: *by Faith ye are saved*, says the Apostle. This appears, to the Soul, the *great Salvation* purchased by our dear Redeemer: therefore, beseech God to beget in you this lovely and lively Faith, whereby you may lay hold on Christ, cleave most inseparably to Christ, and, renouncing every other Refuge, lay the whole Stress of your Souls solely on Christ, as a shipwrecked Mariner relinquishes all his sinking Cargo, and clings only to the Planks that may float him safe to Shore. Seek this

† *Sensible Union* with Christ, or actual Fellowship with Him, in a Way of Comfort, occasioning *The Soul's calm Sun-shine, and the Heart-felt Joy*, is, no Doubt, a Result of Faith. But then, this is not so properly *Union* itself, as *Communion* flowing from an Union that subsisted between Christ and his Church from before all Time: and of which Union, that Communion, which follows upon Faith, is no more than the Perception, Discovery, and Enjoyment.

this Blessing to yourselves, Brethren; and, if ever I forget to join my best Supplications to yours, *let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth.* My Heart's Desire, and Prayer to God, shall always be, that you may believe to the saving of your Souls.—And a holy Conversation will be a Sign unto you, that your Faith is real.—A Life of sincere Holiness can spring from nothing but from this divine Head, CHRIST JESUS. *By this shall all Men know that ye are his Disciples, if ye live by his Spirit, and walk as he walked.* By this, likewise, your own Consciences may be assured, that God hath given you an Interest in his dear Son, and sent him to bless you; if he has turned you from your Iniquities, and created you anew unto good Works.

Give me Leave, at the Close of all, to ask you with all simplicity, Have you understood these Things? do you believe this Report? or am I as one that speaketh a Parable?

If any be of this Opinion, I shall address them in the Words of St. Paul to the Galatians, and commit them to enlightening Grace. The Apostle, inculcating this very Point, and persuading them to this self-same Belief, says, “*Brethren, be as I am, for I WAS as ye are**;” thus the Words I would translate; and then they are very pertinent to the Purpose, and applicable to You and me; and, when paraphrased,

will

* Galat. iv. 12.

run thus: "I don't wonder, Brethren, that ye
 "are prejudiced against this Doctrine. I myself
 "was strongly possessed with such Prejudices.
 "I verily thought, that *my own* Righteousness
 "would, at least, bear a Part in procuring my
 "Acceptance with the eternal Majesty. Deter-
 "mined I was, in some Measure, to *stand on my*
 "*own Bottom*; and advance my Plea, for Life
 "everlasting, from my own holy Endeavours.
 "But now these arrogant Resolutions and vain
 "Confidences are dropt. I now disavow all
 "such Pretensions. God hath brought me to a
 "sounder Mind.—And, as ye have been Par-
 "takers with me in my Mistake, be Partakers
 "also of my righter Judgment. I trusted to I
 "knew not what: but *now, I know in whom I*
 "*have believed*. I put myself, and the whole of
 "my Salvation, in my adored Emanuel's Hands;
 "and doubt not of his Sufficiency for my Se-
 "curity. Henceforward, I set my Heart at Rest,
 "not because I have gone through such Offices,
 "or done such Duties; but because my Re-
 "deemer is mighty and meritorious. 'Tis God,
 "the incarnate God, *that justifies me; who is he*
 "*that shall condemn me?* Never, never shall my
 "Heart cry to Divine Justice, *have Patience*
 "*with me, and I will pay thee all*: this were the
 "Language of gross Ignorance, or great Pre-
 "sumption.

“sumption. But, in all my Temptations, in
“every Discouragement, this shall be my Ac-
“knowledgment, this shall still be my earnest
“Prayer, The Righteousness of thy Obedience,
“most blessed Jesus, is everlasting; O! grant
“me an Interest therein, and I shall live.”—
Amen, Amen; so let it be, O Lord.

F I N I S.

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